Love "contract" rules/breaches: the role of digital abuse

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Abstract *Digital abuse in intimate relationships is a topic that is still poorly studied in Brazil, and this practice is often naturalized, especially among young people. This article aims to know the meanings attributed by adolescents to the set of rules and agreements, implicit or agreed, that define the contours of a "love contract" and the role of digital abuse in these strategic understandings. Qualitative study conducted with primary oral sources, from four focus groups with adolescents from public and private schools, of both sexes, aged 15 to 18 years, totaling 26 students. The analysis was based on the perspective of the interpretation of meanings, with thematic bias, anchored in Bauman's theory of liquid love and Giddens' category of confluent love. Trust, individuality and intimacy were values considered essential for the existence of an intimate relationship considered "serious". The "exposure of intimacy" and "monitoring" without permission are acts that can lead to the breakdown of this "love contract". The adolescents showed us that we need to treat digital abuse between partners by reflecting on the rules, values and agreements that define the contours of the "love contract" they establish.*

Key words *Digital abuse, Love, Teen, Affective-sexual*

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Introduction

Digital abuse in intimate relationships is a topic that has rarely been studied in Brazil. One of the first published reviews highlighted direct battery and control/monitoring as the most common practices of this type of abuse, which is often natural, especially among adolescents and young people[1]. Among the main technology-mediated abusive practices are the several applications to control and monitor the intimate partner, freely available through the digital Android and iOS platforms. The discursive productions conveyed by such tools are supported by rhetorical arguments that refer to the 'proof of love', 'care', and 'protection'[2].

Thus, if when dealing with the topic of digital abuse in affective-sexual relationships, one must recognize the semantic plurality of definitions and practices shaping the contours of these relationships among adolescents[3,4], we also believe that an analysis is required, which puts in perspective the historicity of its defining terms. After all, what kind of love are we talking about?

Love practices have been modified throughout history, and the very meaning of what is 'love' is not a univocal concept[5-8]. In order to undertake such a path, we tapped on references such as the analysis made by Giddens[5] in his work *The transformation of intimacy: sexuality, love and eroticism in modern societies*, and reading of Bauman's renowned work[7], *Liquid Love: on the frailty of human bonds*.

When analyzing the current establishment of the meanings of intimacy, Giddens[5] will show different love notion models that, without excluding the previous historical forms, establish a polysemy and dispute of meanings. The first model, called 'romantic love' inaugurates, in the 18th century, a new form of love relationship seen no longer as a mere financial family arrangement, but as a meeting of souls, a free choice of partners based on love, sexual desire, marriage, freedom, self-fulfillment, motherhood and the idea of 'true and eternal love'. It contributes to the consolidation of romantic love, a set of influences that mainly affected women, such as the creation of a home, the so-called 'invention of motherhood', and the idea of 'respectable woman'. The centrality of the family hitherto based on patriarchal authority focuses on maternal affection. "The mother figure idealization was an integral part of the modern construction of motherhood, and without a doubt directly fed some disseminated values about romantic love"[5].

After the 19th century, home and work separation and the reduced number of children began to be demanded of women due to their inclusion in the labor market, affecting the very patriarchal power exercised within the home space. Patriarchal ideology is maintaining and reproducing an unequal intergender power structure, whose supremacy is exercised by men over women, subordinating them, and, by extension, the identities associated with the female figure and those that blur the pre-defined gender borders[9]. Thus, patriarchy works as a machine of "institutional strength that is spread through social relationships, impregnating social practices, social institutions and ways of being and thinking, thus gaining naturalness due to its vested legitimacy"[9].

From the second half of the twentieth century, with the increasing emancipation and female sexual autonomy, the ideals of romantic love began to lose space to other expanded models, such as that of 'confluent love'. "Confluent love is an active, contingent love, which is why it clashes with the "forever" and "unique" categories of the idea of romantic love [...]. The more the confluent love is consolidated in a real possibility, the more it moves away from the search for the 'special person', and what matters most is the 'special relationship'"[5] (p. 72).

The search for 'special relationship' arises from confluent love as an ideal, in a society where everyone would have the opportunity to become sexually fulfilled, assuming equality in giving, emotional reception and knowledge of the peculiarities of the other, in a negotiated loving order. Therefore, such concepts diverge directly from the idea of romantic love that subjects women to the domestic sphere, subordinates them to men, confines their sexuality to marriage, and the symbol of 'respectable woman'[5].

Since the 2000s, the internet and its digital technological innovations have further expanded the possibilities of connection and hyperconnection, allowing the breakdown of geographical and presence barriers. Known as the second generation of the World Wide Web, Web 2.0 expands the possibilities for exchanging information between people, including collaboration on websites and digital services, transforming the online environment into a dynamic interactive field, changing how the daily intimate and interpersonal relationships are established. Digital social networks appear within this context and start to function as strategic mediators of social and affective-sexual relationships. Such chang-

es transformed 'being linked' into 'connected', changing behaviors and hindering the separation of culture and connectivity, and both offline and online life[10].

This culture continually aims to make itself known, with the establishment of weak ties, which can be undone and redone at any time[10]. Reviving the sense of ephemeral bonds in the loving order, Bauman[7] will portray the impacts of capitalist consumer culture in the order of amorous-sexual affections. Immediacy, consumerism, and hedonism will be decisive values in the production of shallow ties, aiming at fleeting pleasure, without counterparts.

Thus, the set of experiences referred to by the word 'love' expands. Contemporary affective-sexual relationships will be strongly linked to the experimentation of sexuality. "One-night stand sexual encounters are referred to by the code name "making love"[7] (p. 19). The unrelenting and abundant search for the most diverse love experiences increasingly occupies the space of romantic love of yore.

In today's society, declaring eternal love to someone is seen as an imprisonment decree. Bauman[7] affirms that we are living the "liquid love" model, an instantly available relationship. "Nothing to fall in love with [...] None of that sudden torrent of emotions that leave us breathless and with a racing heart. Neither the emotions we call 'love' nor those we soberly describe as 'desire'"[7] (p. 37).

In the model designated as "liquid love", intimate relationships occur by convenience, on impulse, and must be consumed instantly, in one go, and disposable. The agenda is to satisfy desires and experiment, without prejudice, thus demarcating new sexual-moral grammars. The relationship is maintained only as long as both parties are providing sufficient pleasure and satisfaction to maintain it[7]. In this scenario, where relationships have become more fluid, fragile, and with shorter-lasting bonds, adolescents are also called upon to reevaluate the meanings of their loving practices. "[...] the teenager finds himself impelled to set the typical relationship model of this time: shortened relationships, aimed at satisfying immediate needs and desires, without commitments that exceed the moment of the sexual encounter"[11] (p. 70).

Within this more intimate relational context, marked by disputes between the different love models, constant tensions aim to establish limits, whether these are (un) formally demarcated, in a kind of "love contract", which establishes what is or is not allowed, accepted, negotiated or forgiven. "Among the rules agreed by the couple are those that cannot be relaxed [...], lying is not accepted, as it leads to the breach of trust that is essential in the relationship"[12] (p. 521).

Relationships are now increasingly mediated by digital technologies, and also must incorporate in their "love contracts" a set of rules of mutual consent on the uses of these technologies, delimiting the boundaries of what is now seen as "abusive".

Digital abuse in the context of affective-sexual relationships is defined internationally as "cyber dating abuse (CDA)". According to Flach and Deslandes[1], as an emerging event not yet sufficiently defined in the scientific literature, CDA can be characterized as a new expression of intimate partner violence (IPV), "with specific characteristics and different elements of the violence that occurred in face-to-face dating and cyberbullying, perpetrated through the use of the Internet and digital technologies that do not have geographical or temporal barriers to their expression, to cause damage to the partner, and with significant consequences for the mental health of its victims"[1].

The most common types of digital abuse are 1. Direct assault; 2. Control/Monitoring, 3. Sexting as revenge pornography and 4. Sextortion.

Direct assault involves threats, insults, dissemination of private information, including personal photos and videos, identity theft through the creation of fake social network profiles, tracking of the last connection, unauthorized use of the (former) partner's password to check emails, phone contacts, text and social network messages, or even GPS location monitoring, in order to humiliate and embarrass him/her[1,13-15].

Control/monitoring occurs via free Android and iPhone applications, which allow remote control of another person's device, without their knowledge and consent. Among the various functions provided by these applications are the use of "electronic fences", location control, listening to telephone calls, access to text messages, social networks, e-mail, the image and video gallery, WhatsApp cloning, just to name a few. The promise of security and the maintenance of a "peace of mind" are discursive devices that naturalize the use of control and monitoring applications by partners. These practices rooted in the daily life of affective-sexual relationships reiterate old violence and revoke from partners the right to freedom and inviolability of their information[2].

Sexting used as what has come to be called revenge pornography[14,16,17] is the threat to divulge nudes and intimate videos made and exchanged voluntarily during the intimate relationship, forcing someone to do something he/she does not want. As it is a vicious circle of abuse, it can last for a long time and cause severe harm to health, leading to depression and even suicide. It is worth pointing out the moralizing risks of this semantic shift from an abusive practice involving the exposure of the naked body to the notion of pornography (associated with sexual pleasure).

Sextortion refers to the threat of exposing intimate photos and videos of someone if that person does not accept to pay a required amount (extortion). However, as it is an event that has not yet been studied, especially in Brazil, there is hardly any data about it. Nevertheless, SaferNet Brasil – a civil organization focused on the promotion and defense of Human Rights on the Internet in Brazil – received only 332 people seeking help in the first half of 2018 because they were threatened or had their nudes shared without authorization[18].

In the repertoire drawn by the literature to describe this event, recognizing the health consequences of those who suffer such abuse appears as mandatory discursive *topos*. Thus, damage to identity, self-esteem, integrity, and privacy is identified, leaving psychological marks (anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, suicidal thoughts, and attempted suicide) whose extensions are still hardly known[1,13,15,19-23].

These consequences alert us to the importance of the differentiated look of health professionals to address these issues with adolescents and for their prompt identification in health services, given the vulnerability of adolescents to suffer and practice such forms of abuse.

In this study, we built on the definition of violence in affective-sexual relationships adopted by the Convention of Belém do Pará (1994)[24], understanding it as any physical, psychological, verbal, moral or even symbolic action or act that causes death, harm or suffering to the other. However, we expanded it, considering the emic definition proposed by Nascimento and Cordeiro[12] in which young people consider violence in intimate relationships as "any act invading the threshold of the other [...], any transgression to the space of the other, understanding this space not only in its physical, corporeal aspect but as that inherent to its subjectivity, desires, and ideals"[12] (p. 523).

Thus, this paper aims to know the meanings attributed by adolescents to the set of rules and agreements, implicit or agreed, that define the contours of a "love contract" and the role of digital abuse in these strategic understandings. Our research question was designed as follows: What are the meanings and experiences reported by teenagers about digital abuse, and how do they affect their "love contracts"?

Methods

This is a qualitative paper with primary oral sources, whose field of study was two schools in Rio (one private, in the south zone, and the other public federal, polytechnic, in the suburbs). The choice of public and private schools would allow investigating whether there would be significant differences between the meanings attributed to the theme in the different social strata. However, the results did not support distinctions either in the representations or in the reported experiences. Federal school students were approved by public examination, coming from low- and middle-income households. On the other hand, private school students resided in the southern zone of Rio de Janeiro, and most were middle-class.

The choice to take adolescents as the study subjects was because several national and international studies point out this segment as the most vulnerable to violence in affective-sexual relationships[25-29]. Four focus groups were carried out with adolescents of both genders, aged 15-18 years, to build a heterogeneous sample regarding ethnicity/skin color and social extracts. A total of 26 students participated in the study. Of the 22 girls, three were 15 years old, fifteen were 16, and four were 17. Of the four boys, two were 15 years old, and two were 17.

From psychology and with application in social research, we adopted the projective technique[30] that represents the supply of photos, stories, films, or other materials that allow the group to invoke their own experiences by association from that initial stimulus. We used two fictitious cases about digital abuse in intimate relationships to mobilize the focus group debates, which were recorded in MP3 and later transcribed.

In the first case, we sought to debate about the control/monitoring carried out through an application that copies on the cell phone of those who are monitoring the messages received by the intimate partner without their knowledge and consent. The case portrays two 17-year-old heterosexual youths who have been dating for six months. However, the girl starts to suspect that her boyfriend is interested in another girl, and

downloads an application that clones her boyfriend's WhatsApp messages on her cell phone, without his consent and knowledge, and can now access all his messages.

In the second case, we tried to reflect on "revenge pornography", materialized in the dissemination of video, photo, or intimate file on the internet, without the permission of one of the partners. In this case, the situation portrayed the story of three young people (a 15-year-old girl, and two 16-year-old boys). In the first part of the plot, the girl and one of the boys exchange "nudes" through WhatsApp, in a game of seduction, but without being in a serious relationship. In the second part of the plot, the young woman meets another boy she started dating and then tells the first boy that she would no longer exchange "nudes" with him. So the 'rejected' young man decides to send the videos and intimate photos that the young woman had sent him to a WhatsApp group of friends in common to the two, without her consent.

The duration of the groups ranged from 50 to 58 minutes. The focus groups were conducted by the first author and an assistant researcher in the role of the rapporteur. Groups consisted of only boys, and others only girls, with a maximum of 10 participants. The following acronyms and ordinal numbering were adopted to protect the subjects and better categorize and analyze the collected material: EPuMa (Public School-Girls); EPuMo (Public School-Boys); EPaMa (Private School-Girls). A minimum number of boys interested in participating in the focus group was not achieved in the private school.

From successive thematic readings[31], the statements were grouped into three large blocks, with the identification of all the subthemes of each unit. The analysis was conducted by the proposal of "interpretation of meanings" by Gomes et al.[32], including networks of signifiers (words, actions, expressions) into senses and meanings, from successive interpretative elaborations and dialogue with the categories of "liquid love" and "confluent love", contributed by Bauman[7] and Giddens[5].

The study was submitted to and approved by two Research Ethics Committees (CEP).

Results and discussion

Based on the brief reflection on 'love' and the contemporaneity presented in this paper, we identified in the results meanings related to what we categorize as: "Love agreement rules" (block 1), "Love agreement breaching acts" (block 2) and "Perceived Consequences" (block 3).

In block 1, in the declaration of the "Love agreement rules", we do not perceive a distinction in the discursive content of boys and girls. The statements converge to what would be considered "love etiquette rules" for a "good" relationship, where norms that cannot be broken under the risk of confronting values essential to the relationship are established – albeit informally – often leading to the break of the bond established.

The statements conjure meanings based on the recognition of trust, individuality, and intimacy as essential for the duration of an intimate, "serious" relationship. Such values were identified from two central categories: 1. Dialogue/communication, and 2. Privacy (Chart 1).

As illustrated in Chart 1, the categories 'dialogue/communication' and 'privacy' associated with the values of *trust and individuality* are powerfully conjured among the young people participating in the study, who believe that such values are seen as something relevant to the relationship. "[...] some personal situations cannot be discussed with the partner" (EPuMa (GF1)). "[...] he may be solving a personal family issue that does not concern the girlfriend" (EPuMa (GF3)).

The value 'trust' is called on by young people, especially in addressing conflicting issues, with dialogue being their ideal means of dealing with concerns and disagreements. Besides the 'trust' value, 'individuality' is overinvoked by young people as essential value to ensure privacy in the relationship. Despite the relationship gaining a status of "serious commitment", these young people interviewed argue that not everything should be shared with the partner, and each other's private space in the relational context should be respected.

However, paradoxically, as we are daily invited to expose ourselves in the media and social networks, we often share facts from private and everyday life as if they were public[33-35], directly conflicting with the desire for "preserving individuality" so actively cited by young people in this study.

In the current connectivity[35] era, everyone is required to experience fluid intimate relationships, weak ties, based on experimentation, volume, hedonistic, and immediate pleasure, without establishing bonds so as not to lose any potential possibility for something better, the so-

Chart 1. Distribution of the "love agreement rules" by categories, associated ideas (AI) and values.

Love agreements rules	Categories	Rules and AI	Values
	Dialogue/ communication	**Rule:** Partners must expose ideas, feelings, and resolve conflicts through dialogue. **AI:** Have a good relationship. If there is no dialogue, there is no trust. "In any type of relationship, we **have to talk** if there's something we don't like. We cannot make any hasty decisions. **The best way to solve things** is by talking, right." (EPuMa (GF1)). "Usually, in a relationship, you have to have mutual **trust**. If the two **stopped and talked**, I think it would be much better than him hiding what he is doing, and she is trying to find out using this application." (EPuMo (GF2)).	Trust
	Privacy	**Rule:** Partners must have their privacy ensured. **AI:** Breaking a pre-established bond of trust. "Because a couple who lives as a couple, **has privacy**" (EPuMa (GF1)). "If you have that, there's no trust. If you don't have trust... **what's the use of dating if you don't have trust**" (EPuMa (GF3)).	Trust
		Rule: Partners should have the right to inform only what they consider relevant to the relationship, and not everything that happens in their private life. **AI:** Invading the other's individuality. **"Each is his/her individual"** (EPuMa (GF1)). "The person **doesn't necessarily have to know your whole life**, you know?" (EPuMo (GF2)). **"There are times when you have time with yourself, your stuff. You don't tell everything:** just the essential, nothing more" (EPuMa (GF3)).	Individuality

Source: Authors' elaboration.

called "liquid love"[7]. These new expressions and types of intimate relationships (confluent love and liquid love[7]) coexist with old relationship practices (romantic love) blurring the public and private boundaries.[33-35]

Thus, at the same time that young people seek to sustain a relationship based on confluent love that, unlike liquid love and romantic love – centered on the female figure, on the idealized person, on the soul mate – is self-centered. That is, although the relationship is maintained as long as there is pleasure, confluent love admits bond and commitment in the established intimate relationship.

In block 2, "Love agreement breaching acts", the statements converge to criticize acts that involve the meanings of disrespect and possession/restriction. Through the 'exposure of intimacy' and 'unauthorized monitoring' categories, the meanings assigned evoked the conduct to be repudiated, and which would contribute to breaching this 'love agreement' (Table 2).

The harm caused by this "stolen autonomy" echoing in the statements the feelings of disappointment, sadness, helplessness, and violation of the (former) partner in not respecting the rules of "good relationship" is emphatically verbalized by the participants.

A consensus was identified in the opinions of both boys and girls, who understand that the exposure of videos and photos of an intimate nature without consent is something that violates the privacy and 'exposes the intimacy' of the partner.

These young people report the dissemination of photos, intimate videos, and "nudes" on the internet as something that occurs very frequently for both sexes. Notwithstanding this, when the disclosure of the intimate photo is of a young boy, this publicity even gains a status of "positive propaganda", which is not the case for young girls, who experience the reinforcement of old patriarchal cultural practices that undermine the female image and put her moral conduct in check (EPuMa (GF1)). Such attitudes reinforce old 'respectable woman' symbols grounded on the exercise of female sexuality confined to marriage[5]. Women who fled this model would be 'labeled' as 'women of dubious conduct'[36-39]. These ideas are rooted in the daily life of social relationships and always clash with other, more emancipatory ideas of sexual and gender equality.

The differentiation of 'traditional roles' of gender naturalizes practices of abuse and violence, generating different consequences for boys and girls. Those 'girls' who try to break with these 'traditional' stereotypes are stigmatized and judged, while boys are not.

"For example, in my case [...] I was just talking to another boy [...]. Then, someone I don't know told him that I was talking to another boy [...]. Anyway, because of that, he cloned my WhatsApp" (EPuMa (GF1)).

"[...] I think it is not just a matter of exposure. It is a whole social problem about the woman's body. When I say this, I speak specifically of women, because I noticed that the men do not go through this, in this same situation" (EPuMa (GF3)).

"[...] Then you stop and think. For a boy, he publishes it [...] talks to someone and says: look at how big it is, it's beautiful... well, [...] it's all about the social issue, really [...]" (EPuMa (GF3)).

"[...] when it's about a boy, nude, you know, nobody cares much. However, when it's about a girl, the girl is labeled as a bitch, tramp, hooker, that stuff" (EPaMa (GF4)).

In this whirlwind of relationship opportunities, divergent behaviors and moral judgments are enhanced when it comes to expressing male and female sexuality. While it is 'acceptable' for boys to experience confluent and liquid love in their relational daily life, girls are 'expected' to be discrete, submissive and introspective, based on the romantic love ideal.

It is worth mentioning that sexuality is historically produced from multiple discourses about sex that not only regulate, normatize, and establish knowledge, but also produce "truths". Women learn from a very young age that issues related to her sexuality are private, disassociating them from their social and political roots of restraint, control, censorship, and intimidation[6].

Young women are socially 'educated' to act within some 'morally acceptable' standards, such as disciplining and controlling their sexual desires, 'be respectable', caring for 'how they sit' or 'dress up' in order to 'not attract male attention', while also being educated to dress for 'men', being 'pretty' and 'attractive to the male eye', being 'female'[36-39].

However, when these women 'draw the attention of the male audience' and suffer sexual abuse, they are blamed for the harassment or violence suffered, and will also be asked about 'the time they were walking alone', the 'type of clothes they wore' and 'if they had drunk alcohol'[40, 41].

And precisely because of the way the woman's 'body' is seen and how she is judged socially and morally, we find some girls' statements emphasizing how difficult it is to trust another person, to the point of exposing their sexuality fully, without fear of judgment, retaliation, or that situations of abuse occur, such as when 'sexting' becomes 'sextortion' or 'revenge pornography'.

Mediation by the State in what is meant by CDA appears as a voiced appeal in the interviews to the moral reorganization of what the community sense can no longer restrain on its own. Thus, it is understandable that some young people emphasize in their discourse the need to create a law to prevent this type of abuse in digital media, given that the mechanisms for controlling behaviors triggered by family or educational agents are not always enough.

"Well, then, again, this thing, the internet seems something lawless" (EPuMo (GF2).

"So, I think that there should be a measure to prohibit or something like this, a law to end this" (EPuMo (GF2).

The judicialization of interpersonal relationships has been a recurring practice, as a mediator of personal and intimate conflicts[42,43]. Furthermore, it should be noted that at the time of the focus groups, between April and August 2018, several bills were underway in the Brazilian National Congress to curb the practice of digital abuse in affective-sexual, but not yet approved.

Chart 2. Distribution of "the love agreement breaching acts" by categories, associated ideas (AI) and values.

Love agreement breaching acts	Categories	Acts and AI	Values
	Exposure of intimacy	**Breaking acts:** break the bond of trust. When one of the partners makes the material of an intimate nature available on the internet, produced while maintaining the relationship. **AI:** Harm to intimacy, disrespect for one's privacy and integrity. "**A friend of my cousin had her video with her boyfriend released. She broke up, and her boyfriend decided to upload it...**" (EPuMa (GF1)). "[...]I think it's very wrong, **because it's an intimate thing, it's her body**" (EPuMo (GF2)). "Because, you know, **something you do when you are together**, you and your girlfriend, **you don't spread it around**" (EPuMo (GF2)). "When **you take our thing and spread it** [...] the act of publishing it, exposing it to people who didn't have the consent to see it, that's what is wrong" (EPuMa (GF3)). "**As soon as people share it, you lose control**. Since it is your body, you are affected, not the one who is sharing" (EPaMa (GF4)). "[...] even when you have a good relationship with your body, you accept yourself; **you still have the issue of your privacy and choosing.** I want this person, and I don't want that person, you know?" (EPaMa (GF4)).	Disrespect
	Unauthorized monitoring	**Breaking acts**: Monitoring without the partner's permission **AI**: it is understood as abuse, an obsessive control, an act of possession, which exposes and invades the privacy of partners through surveillance. "But I think we can't confuse it either. It's one thing to be jealous of your boyfriend, that's probably normal, and another thing [...] **to download on a cell phone** [...] to have, so-to-speak, **abuse** someone, **be invasive and so forth**" (EPuMa (GF1)). "A friend [...] one day told me that she found out that **her boyfriend had put this messaging app on her cell phone** [...]. Her boyfriend was always very possessive [...], so they broke up [...]" (EPuMo (GF2)). "[...] an **act of possession** to put the a**pplication to see what he was doing** with the messages and such." (EPuMo (GF2)). "It is **obsessive control**; it is an obsession" (EPuMa (GF3)). "**Because the application is already wrong because it exists.** It is unacceptable to install an application on someone else's phone to know everything" (EPuMa (GF3)). "It's her stuff, not yours. **You have no right to touch someone else's cell phone**"(EPaMa (GF4)).	Possession/ curtailment

Source: Authors' elaboration.

However, in September 2018, Law 13.718/18 (which characterizes the crime known as revenge pornography) came into force, which, because of its recent enactment, does not provide sources of official statistical records to inform us whether it has already promoted any reduction of this type of practice on the internet.

In block 3, "Perceived consequences" (Chart 3), through the categories 'Harm to mental/physical health' and 'Harm to social inclusion/socialization', we can reflect on the importance that adolescents attach to the consequences of digital abuse in youth intimate relationships.

The harm to health related to CDA practices was self-reported by young people during the focus groups. This data highlights the importance of having a close look at this emerging event whose consequences are still difficult to measure. Digital abuse in youth intimate relationships shows how much multidisciplinary and interinstitutional work is required to expand the possibilities of access to support and identification by health and teaching staff and other civil society institutions to the event of digital abuse within youth affective-sexual relationships.

The statements shown in Chart 3 confirm that, without adequate professional support, it becomes excruciating for this young person to overcome abuse and be re-victimized daily, whether at school, through digital social networks, e-mail, or electronic messages. This almost endless cycle of suffering can, and for the most part, be a determining factor in the development of consequences for mental, physical health and the youth interactive process itself. As the international literature already shows, these young people exposed to such abuse in the affective-sexual relationship often develop conditions of low self-esteem, isolation, depression, panic crisis, anxiety, which can lead to self-mutilation and even suicide attempt[14,15,19,22,23].

Final considerations

We found that demands for exposure and freedom, typical of the "culture of connectivity"[35], were aligned concomitantly with the desire for privacy and individuality. It seems contradictory that antagonistic desires are so strongly overinvoked by these young people, but we believe that such manifestations have an intimate relationship with the fashionable models of love and their expression in digital media. Exposing facts and events related to private life is something

natural and part of digital daily life. Despite this, some attitudes 'hurt' what adolescents understand by an 'individual autonomy' in deciding what should be publicized, when and, mainly, to whom.

The question of the decision of 'who do I send to' the content of an intimate nature, that is, to which audience I decide to expose my intimacy, was an important fact and emphatically stated by the young people at the time of the research. It is the prerogative of choosing the media and the audience of exposure, new moral rules, designed at the interface with digital sociability, which brings original questions and demand from the health and education professionals who work with these segments a new look.

In this study, we observed that young people have expectations and guide relationships due to the idea of confluent love[5] but included in a social scenario where liquid love unfolds intensely[7] and the dictates of romantic love, from a gender perspective, are imposed on girls. These distinct love models coexist and dispute the meanings of the limits and demarcation of "love agreement" borders. One of the limitations of our study was that it included a few boys, and the issue of sexual orientation was not addressed. The social differences in income in the experiences of digital abuse were not captured in the statements, either due to the widespread use of technologies regardless of income, or the reduced universe of schools. However, our field was limited to the urban context, not seizing the meanings of other territorialities.

Another relevant data was the fact that these young people try to protect those younger than themselves when using the internet. This may be related to the albeit early understanding of the consequences that exposure on the Internet on the lives of those who experience such abuse. The "consequences" pointed out by the respondents seem to show that harm to mental health and social inclusion of those who suffer such digital abuse is recognized from the experiences of these young people. Thus, taking into account such abusive practices and (de) naturalizing them, and urgent movements to be provided in the various spaces of social reproduction such as family, community, schools, health facilities, among others, is essential. However, as the research path has shown us, it makes little sense to discuss separately digital abuse between affective-sexual partners and their prevention and coping methods. Strategies that address only normatively "how to protect against digital abuse" do not seem to

Table 3. Distribution of "perceived consequences" by categories and meanings assigned.

Perceived consequences	Categories	Meanings assigned
consequences	Harm to mental/physical health	The individual who experiences online abuse in an intimate relationship goes into deep distress and can suffer "depression", "paranoia", self-mutilation, and suicidal thoughts. "**So the person is extremely depressed, to the point of being depressed,** for sure, because that, for sure, is... stays for a long time" (EPuMo (GF2)). "I think the p**erson is really in a mental state, that is... it is... depression, paranoia**" (EPuMo (GF2)). "**The girl got depressed with this**. It's a feeling that… like, it's the worst ever". (EPuMo (GF2)). "[...] Like, **she went into very severe depression**" (EPuMa (GF3)). One thing that is so intimate going public. T**he girl wanted to kill herself,** because everyone talking, seeing. It's horrible" (EPuMo (GF2)). "I know a case, and this one is heavy because the girl **started to mutilate herself** after that happened [...]"(EPuMa (GF3)).
	Social inclusion/ socialization	The harm generated can contribute to seclusion, directly affecting the social inclusion process. "A friend of my cousin had her video with her boyfriend released. She broke up, and the boyfriend decided to put it on ... [...] she moved school [...] **she was distraught. She spent a long time without leaving home**" (EPuMa (GF1)). "And then everyone heard about it, and then **she felt very humiliated**. As it was at the end of the year, she hoped to complete the year **and left school.** However, it was a tough situation. **They still talk about it at school** [...]" (EPuMa (GF3)). "Being a teenager, a victim of something like that is [...] a**part from the social judgment** that is on top of that, **we have family judgment as well** because it can have a response such as changing the relationship with you, disappointing you" (EPuMa (GF3)). "There may be people on the other side of the world watching ... seeing me naked. Then I think that I don't know, I think **I would desire to leave**. I think I will **never see anyone again** [...] I would certainly **ask my mother to take me out of school** [...] **change the state, change the country**" (EPuMa (GF4)).

Source: Authors' elaboration.

account for the complexity of the topic. The adolescents showed us that it is necessary to deal with this issue from the reflection on the implicit or agreed rules, values and agreements defining the contours of the "love agreement" that they establish.

Collaborations

RMD Flach and SF Deslandes worked equally in the elaboration of the paper.

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